

Grade 8 Life Orientation Worksheet

Safety versus Human Rights

Passage and questions about violations of human rights

Read the following text.

Excerpts from:

Bedfordview and Edenvale News. Wednesday August 12, 2009

By: Charmaine Slater

NO CLOSURE: SAFETY VERSUS HUMAN RIGHTS COMES UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Road closures in Edenvale have come under the spotlight over recent weeks.

While some residents are in favour of the use of boom gates as they offer a higher sense of security, others feel that their human rights have been violated. Many residents in the area feel that boomed-off areas and road closures are restrictive and offer no real solution to fighting crime in the area.

In the report on the open hearings on road closures and boom gates by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), published in December 2004, it was stated that the commission does not generally support the use of boom gates and gated communities. The report found that, based on the information presented to the commission, these measures cause social division and dysfunctional cities and lead to further polarisation of society. The proposed benefits of the closures, by way of enhanced safety and security, are in doubt and the subject of considerable debate.

It is also stated that the commission cannot condone conduct which resembles past discriminatory practices or denies people their fundamental human rights. The report further states that the operation of security access restriction points should not have the effect of denying or hindering public access to public spaces, including roads, nor should they require certain categories of persons to furnish private information. This includes information such as destination, purpose of visit and identity documentation.

The SAHRC says that it was argued that the existence of booms and the closure of roads had a positive effect in bringing down crime. According to the Edenvale SAPS, speaking from an Edenvale viewpoint, road closures and boomed-off areas have assisted in the fight against crime.

“Although road closures are seen as an inconvenience by residents, they have saved lives. Road closures narrow down the escape routes of criminals and decrease patrol areas for the SAPS. With security companies we have more manpower on the ground.” The spokesperson added that road closures do not hinder the SAPS as it is provided with maps and has insight into every road closure erected in the area. He stated that the SAPS supports any legal

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means of fighting crime. Residents living in enclosed areas have become far less of a target than those living outside enclosed areas.

Answer the following questions based on the above news article:

1. Why do you think human rights may be violated by road closures? [5]
2. Why do you think human rights may be protected by road closures? [5]

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Suggested Solutions

Question number	Possible marks	Solution
1.	5	Own answer (should include points such as freedom of movement and residence, privacy, equality, discrimination)
2.	5	Own answer (should include points such as life, freedom and security of the person, privacy)
Total	10	